

## Fit for 55: Combined Transport is the low hanging fruit for the decarbonisation of freight transport

14 July 2021: The European Commission unveils its much-anticipated legislative package titled *Fit for 55*<sup>1</sup>, a comprehensive and interconnected set of proposals of historic dimension. It lays out the roadmap for the European Union to achieve the cut of its carbon emissions by 55% until 2030. This objective, agreed in the European Climate Law<sup>2</sup> by the 27 Member States governments and the European Parliament, is considerably higher than the originally envisioned 40% based on the 1990 level of emissions.

To achieve the 55% cut, no stone can remain unturned in Europe. Previously untouched sectors, such as the fossil fuel powered modes of freight transport, will have to undergo meaningful transformation. Ambitious pledges are being made, including the development of presently non-existing technologies such as renewable hydrogen generation, while unimaginably excessive infrastructure investments are proposed, which include the electrification of motorways and the development of extensive alternative fueling capacities.

Combined Transport already offers a proven solution today, based on well known, widely practiced and affordable technologies. **Market players already report 65-70% CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions realised by shifting pure road transport chains to Combined Transport.** By complementing electric rail freight and electrically powered intermodal transshipment with electric trucks on the first and last mile road legs, Zero Carbon Combined Transport can become daily routine within a decade.

To meet the targets, Combined Transport would have to deliver a realistic 7-8% yearly growth rate, the conditions to which must be created. Like this, Combined Transport alone could produce the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction expected from surface freight transport in Europe.

Investments should be chosen, which offer results with low risk and using the least amount of taxpayer resources, from among the various options floated by the different actors looking to profit from the transition ahead of us. Zero Carbon Combined Transport has no R&D needs, as it builds on existing technologies. Thus, Combined Transport can materially facilitate carbon-neutrality by 2050.

The Combined Transport solution offers additional benefits to Europe, such as the greatest pro rata energy efficiency, high value-added jobs, improved work/life balance for transport workers, fewer transport accidents and a host of valuable, flexibility-enhancing inventory solutions sought by European manufacturers currently reconfiguring their global supply chains.

Europe could become a continent less dependent on imported energy through the path of development offered by Zero Carbon Combined Transport, since it uses renewable electricity produced by windfarms, solar and hydroelectric plants in a direct and sparing way.



Ralf-Charley Schultze

*"Climate protection and the future liveability of our continent is in the hands of policy- and decisionmakers. They should pay attention to Combined Transport, the proven freight transport solution, which is able to bring the expected decarbonisation of the surface freight transport sector. The needs of Combined Transport to achieve the climate goals are the lowest, both in terms of risk and of the amount of taxpayer burden it imposes, since it is based on existing technologies." - emphasised UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze.*

### Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport** (UIRR) represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transshipment Terminal Managers.

Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).

31, rue Montoyer - bte 11 | B-1000 | Brussels  
[www.uirr.com](http://www.uirr.com) | [headoffice.brussels@uirr.com](mailto:headoffice.brussels@uirr.com)  
Tel. : +32 (0)2 548 78 90

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_3541](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_3541)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eu-climate-action/law\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eu-climate-action/law_en)